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ABSTRACT

To assist the learner of English as a second language in dealing with the various services provided by the post office, a series of dialogs, comprehension questions, readings, and points of discussion are presented. The text is illustrated with sample forms. (JB)

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ED195148

STUDENT LESSON #13

THE POST OFFICE

English for Living

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OBJECTIVES

When you finish this module you will be able to:

1. Buy stamps and other things at the post office.
2. Send a package.
3. Fill out a form for something lost in the mail.
4. Send a money order.
5. Fill out an alien-address report.
6. Report a change of address.

SITUATION SETTER

The post office is a very important place. It is not just a place to buy stamps and mail letters. There are many other things you do at the post office. You go there to send packages, buy money orders, and fill out a form for something lost in the mail. You also go to the post office to fill out an alien-address report and a change of address.

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

Lee is in the post office. He wants to mail some letters.

DIALOG 1

Lee: I'd like a book of 15¢ stamps, please.
Clerk: That'll be $3.60 for 24 stamps.
Lee: Here you are.
Clerk: Thank you.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where is Lee?
2. What does he want?
3. How much is a book of 15¢ stamps?

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

ZIP codes are used to help get letters to people faster. Be sure to include the ZIP code of the person you're writing to.

DIALOG 2

Lee: I'm sending this letter to Fairfax, California, but I don't have the ZIP code.
Clerk: It's 94930. It's a good idea to always use the ZIP code in an address. Don't forget to put your ZIP code in your return address.
Lee: Why are ZIP codes so important?
Clerk: They show the number of the post office that delivers your mail. It's easier and quicker to sort the mail by numbers than by addresses.
Lee: How can I find ZIP codes when I need them?
Clerk: We have a book at the post office. It has all the U.S. ZIP codes. You can also buy a ZIP code book for yourself. Local ZIP codes are listed in the yellow pages of the telephone book.
Lee: Thank you. That's good to know.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What information does Lee need before he sends the letter to California?
2. What is a ZIP code?
3. Why are ZIP codes so important?
4. Where can Lee find a ZIP code if he doesn't know it?
5. Does he always have to go to the post office to find out a ZIP code?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tell about the postal service in your country.
2. Do you have ZIP codes in your country? What was yours?
3. Have you ever gone to the post office? What did you have to do? Did you have any problems? What were they?

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

Lee wrote a letter to his friend in Mexico. He wants to know how much it will cost to send the letter.

DIALOG 3

Lee: How much does it cost to send a letter to Mexico first class?
Clerk: The rates for Mexico and Canada are the same as in the United States. It's fifteen cents an ounce for first class.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where is Lee's friend?
2. What does Lee want to know?
3. How much does it cost to send a letter to Mexico or Canada?

MICROCONVERSATION: Practice this conversation with another student.

Student A: This letter is going overseas. How much is the postage to France?
to Spain?
to Japan?
to Belgium?
to Vietnam?

Student B: Let me weigh that letter for you. It's half an ounce. That'll be 31¢.

DIALOG 4: AEROGRAMS

Lee: What's an aerogram?
Clerk: It's a special paper for writing a short airmail letter. You write on it, fold it, and write the address on the outside. The postage is included in the price of the aerogram. It is cheaper than sending an airmail letter.
Lee: How much is an aerogram?
Clerk: It's 22¢. An airmail letter costs 31¢ a half ounce.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is an aerogram?
2. Do you have to put a stamp on it?
3. How much is an aerogram?
4. Which is more expensive to send, an aerogram or a regular airmail letter? How much does it cost to send a regular airmail letter?

READING

Here are the different prices of things you can buy in a post office.

ITEM	PRICE
Book of 15¢ stamps	$3.60 a book
First-class stamps	15¢ each
Overseas	31¢ a half ounce
Aerograms	22¢ each
Postcards	10¢ each
Stamped envelopes	18¢ each

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How much is an envelope that already has a stamp on it?
2. How much does it cost to send an airmail letter to Switzerland?
3. How much is a book of 15¢ stamps?
4. How much are three aerograms? Seven postcards? Two first-class stamps?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How much does it cost to send a first-class letter in your country?
2. Is it cheaper or more expensive than in the United States?

SITUATION SETTER: INSURING A PACKAGE

You should insure valuable packages. When you insure a package, you have to tell the clerk how much the package is worth. You pay extra money for the insurance. How much you pay depends on how much the package is worth. If the package gets lost, the post office will pay you the amount of money the package is worth.

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

Kim is at the post office. She has a package which she wants to send to California.

DIALOG

Kim: I want to send this package to California.
Clerk: Do you want to insure it?
Kim: Yes, I do.
Clerk: How much do you want to insure it for?
Kim: It's worth about $25.
Clerk: That'll be $4.99 postage and $1.80 for the insurance; $6.79 altogether.
Kim: OK. Here you are.
Clerk: Thank you. Here's your receipt.
Kim: Thank you very much.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What should you do when you send a valuable package?
2. What does Kim want to send?
3. Does she want to insure the package.
4. How much is the package worth?
5. How much is the postage?
6. How much does the insurance cost?
7. What will happen if the package gets lost in the mail?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever mailed a package?
2. Was it worth a lot of money?
3. Did you insure it?

SITUATION SETTER: PACKAGES LOST IN THE MAIL

You can fill out a form for packages that get lost in the mail. The post office will try to find the lost package.

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

Kim has lost a package in the mail. It was not insured. She's in the post office now.

DIALOG

Kim: I sent a package to Pennsylvania two months ago. My aunt never received it.
Clerk: Let me get a claim form. Did you insure the package?
Kim: No, I didn't.
Clerk: We can trace it, but if we don't find it you can't get your money back, because it wasn't insured.

The clerk gets the claim form. He is getting the information from Kim.

Clerk: When did you mail it?
Kim: Around September 15th.
Clerk: Where did you mail it from?
Kim: From the post office on New Scotland Avenue, Slingerlands.

* * * * * * * *

Clerk: Who was the package sent to?
Kim: Sue Ling, 180 Lake Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
Clerk: Did you have a return address on the package?
Kim: Yes. It's Kim Lu, 210 New Scotland Avenue, Slingerlands, New York 12808.
Clerk: That's all. I'll send this form out to the Lost and Found Department. We'll try to trace the package.
Kim: I'd appreciate it very much. Thank you.
Clerk: You're welcome.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What has Kim lost?
2. Was the package insured?
3. When did she send the package?
4. Where did she mail it from?
5. Who was the package sent to?
6. Did Kim put a return address on the package?
7. What will the clerk do?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever lost anything through the mail?
2. What is the safest way to send a package?
3. Why is it important to have the return address on the package?

SITUATION SETTER: SENDING A MONEY ORDER

A money order is a safe way to mail money to people and to pay bills. It can be used like a check.

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

Kim wants to pay for some records she ordered through the mail.

DIALOG

Kim: I'd like to mail some money to pay a bill. How can I do it?
Clerk: You can buy a money order.
Kim: What is a money order?
Clerk: A money order is used like a check. It's a safe way to send money. Nobody can cash the money order except the person you send it to. You give the money to me and I'll give you a money order for the same amount. You also pay a small fee.
Kim: I'd like a money order for $16.10.
Clerk: All right. We charge 35¢ for the money order. The total is $16.45.
Kim: Here you are.
Clerk: Thank you. Here's your receipt. Keep it so that you can get your money back if the money order is lost.
Kim: Thank you very much.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

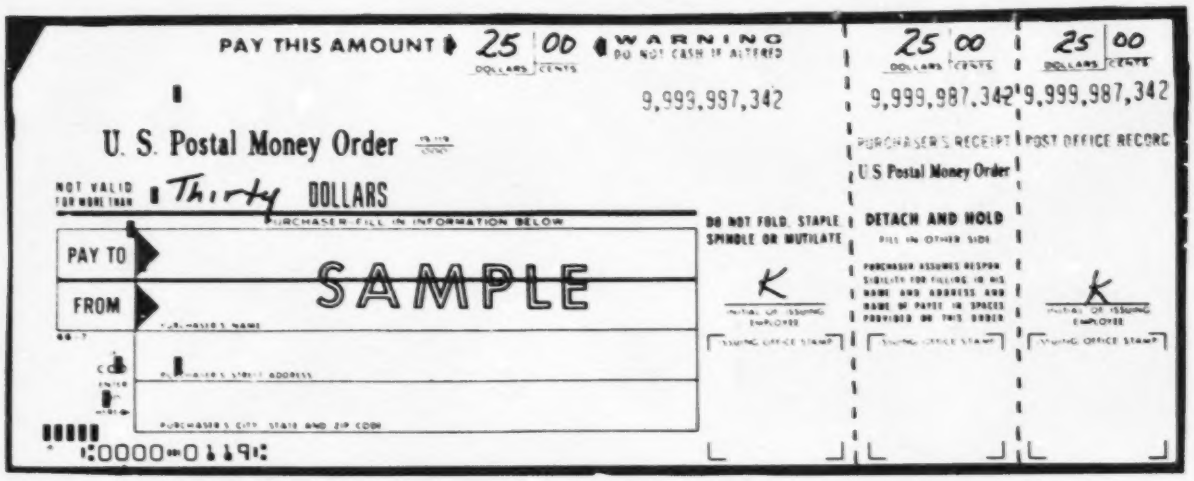
1. Where is Kim?
2. What does she want to do?
3. What is a money order? How does she get one?
4. How much do they charge for the money order?
5. Why should she keep her receipt?
6. Can she use a money order to pay her bill?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is it safe to send cash through the mail? Why not?
2. Why is a money order safe?
3. Have you ever bought a money order?
4. Are money orders accepted everywhere?
5. Have you ever received a money order?

SKILL: MONEY ORDER

Fill out this money order. You owe $25.00 to the Capitol Record Company for the records you ordered. Only fill out the parts that say "Pay to" and "From."



SITUATION SETTER: THE ALIEN-ADDRESS REPORT

Alien residents in the United States must fill out an alien-address report every January. It is necessary to fill out one card for each person in the family, including children.

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

Kim is talking to her teacher, Mrs. Johnson, about some immigration rules.

DIALOG

Mrs. Johnson: It's January. Have you filled out the alien-address report for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization service?
Kim: No, I haven't. What is it?
Mrs. Johnson: It's a form on which alien residents have to report their addresses every January.
Kim: Where can I get an alien-address report?
Mrs. Johnson: They're available at any post office in January.
Kim: I'll get one as soon as possible.
Mrs. Johnson: Don't forget to fill it out.
Kim: No, I won't.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. When do you have to fill out the alien-address report?
2. What is the alien-address report?
3. Where can you get the form?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever filled out the alien-address report?
2. Must every resident alien fill one out every year?

SKILL: PRACTICE FILLING OUT THE ALIEN-ADDRESS REPORT.

ALIEN ADDRESS REPORT — COMPLETE ALL ITEMS – PRINT IN BLOCK LETTERS WITH BALL-POINT PEN OR USE TYPEWRITER

1. (LAST NAME) (FIRST) (MIDDLE)

2. ADDRESS IN THE U.S. (EXCEPT COMMUTERS–SHOW ADDRESS IN MEXICO OR CANADA. SEE ITEM 10)

CITY OR TOWN | STATE | ZIP CODE | CHECK HERE IF ADDRESS IS CURRENT ☐

3. COPY NO. FROM ALIEN CARD: A– | 4. PLACE ENTERED THE U.S. | 5. DATE ENTERED U.S. (MO./DAY/YR.) | 6. DATE OF ADMISSION TO PRESENT IMMIGRATION STATUS (MO./DAY/YR.)

7. SEX ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE | 8. DATE OF BIRTH (MO./DAY/YR.) | 9. COUNTRY OF BIRTH | 10. NATIONALITY | 11. SOCIAL SECURITY NO. (IF ANY)

12. ARE YOU PRESENTLY EMPLOYED IN THE U.S. ☐ YES ☐ NO | 13. FOR GOVERNMENT USE ONLY

14. PRESENT OR MOST RECENT OCCUPATION IN U.S. (MAIN JOB) | 15. TYPE OF FIRM OR BUSINESS OF PRESENT OR MOST RECENT EMPLOYMENT (MAIN JOB)

16. STATUS (CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX)

1 ☐ IMMIGRANT (PERMANENT RESIDENT)
2 ☐ IMMIGRANT (COMMUTER WORKER-CHECK THIS BLOCK IF YOU ENTER THE U.S. DAILY OR AT LEAST TWICE A WEEK)
3 ☐ VISITOR 4 ☐ CREWMAN 5 ☐ STUDENT
6 ☐ EXCHANGE ALIEN 7 ☐ REFUGEE
8 ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)_____

17. I CERTIFY THAT THE STATEMENTS ON THIS CARD ARE TRUE TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

SIGNATURE (IF UNDER 14 YEARS OLD, SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN) | DATE

THIS CARD MUST BE MAILED — PLACE A TEN CENT U.S. POSTAGE STAMP ON REVERSE AND DROP IN NEAREST MAIL BOX. IF NOT MAILED DURING JANUARY, PLACE IN ENVELOPE AND MAIL TO U.S. IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20536.

FORM I–53 (Rev. 1-1-79)N U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE – IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE
FORM APPROVED OMB NO. 43-R0306

DIALOG: CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Lee is moving. He wants to know what will happen to his mail.

Lee: I'm going to move to another address soon. What happens to my mail?
Kim: Go to the post office and fill out a change of address card. The post office will send any mail that goes to your old address to your new one.
Lee: Thanks for the information.
Kim: You're welcome.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Lee going to do? What does he want to know?
2. What must he do in order to get his mail at his new address?
3. What will happen if he doesn't fill out a change of address card?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Did you ever move to a new address in your country?
2. Did you have trouble with your mail?

SKILL: Practice filling out this change of address form. You're moving to 871 North Side Drive, Johnson City, Texas 78636, permanently, on May 7, 1977.

PRINT OR TYPE *(Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial)*

THIS ORDER PROVIDES
for the forwarding of first-class mail and all parcels of obvious value for a period not to exceed 1 year.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS IS FOR
- ☐ ENTIRE FAMILY
- ☐ INDIVIDUAL SIGNER ONLY

FORWARDING POSTAGE GUARANTEED FOR MAGAZINES & NEWSPAPERS
- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO

CLERK/ CARRIER ENDORSEMENT

DATE ENTERED

OLD ADDRESS
- NO. & STREET, APT. SUITE, PO BOX OR RD NO. *(In care of)*
- POST OFFICE, STATE AND ZIP CODE

NEW ADDRESS
- NO. & STREET, APT. SUITE, PO BOX OR RD NO. *(In care of)*
- POST OFFICE, STATE AND ZIP CODE

EFFECTIVE DATE | TEMPORARY DATE *(UNTIL)*

SIGN HERE ▶ | DATE SIGNED

If signed as agent, include title. DO NOT print or type.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

CLASS OF MAIL	TYPE	INFORMATION
First class	Letter	The usual way to send a letter. 15¢.
Registered	Letter or small package	The safest way to send something valuable.
Airmail	Letter or small package	The best way to send mail to foreign countries or any long distance.
Special delivery	Letter or package	It will be delivered even when the post office is closed (for example, Sunday).
Insured	Packages and important letters	You insure the package or letter for its value, in case it gets lost.
Parcel post	Packages	Usual way to send a package.
Surface mail (3rd class)	Letters or packages	This is the slowest way to send packages.
Book rate (4th class)	Books and records	It's a special cheaper rate for books and records. You cannot send a letter inside the package.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the best way to send a letter to Spain?
2. Why do you insure a package?
3. What is the safest way to send a valuable letter?
4. What is the cheapest way to send records?
5. How do you send a letter that needs to be delivered right away?
6. What is the usual way to send a letter?
7. What is parcel post?
8. What is the slowest way to send letters or packages?